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SUBJECT: World Wide Briefing - Africa

1. Africa has continued to suffer over the past year from the twin problems of economic scarcity and political instability. Food shortages and the crushing burden of energy costs weaken the economies of nearly every black-ruled country. Together these preclude the raising of living standards which in turn leads to political unrest. The extreme fragility of national political institutions facilitates the overthrow of representative government where it has begun to take root and paves the way for its replacement with authoritarian leadership.

2. This combination of economic and political weakness continues to provide ideal opportunities for Soviet intervention. The Soviets provide little economic aid, but use substantial military assistance to bolster client regimes and to encourage subversion by guerrilla movements. By the end of 1981, a total of almost 12,000 Soviet military and technical advisers were stationed in 30 African countries. Their efforts were supplemented by over 40,000 Cuban troops and advisers in 16 countries and by Libyan funds freely used for subversion and arms.

3. In southern Africa, Namibia remains the most critical issue. Progress has been made toward a settlement but significant problems remain. The leadership of the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO) has raised objections to the constitutional principles set forth by the Contact Group, which may prolong the negotiations in Phase I of the process. Black

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states feel increasingly threatened by Pretoria's military power and have become all the more willing to accept Soviet and Cuban military assistance. Moscow's growing involvement, in turn, aggravates South African fears and has accelerated the trend toward more aggressive policies. The result is an ever deepening cycle of mistrust and hostility in which each side has tangible evidence of its worst-case analysis of the other's intentions.

4. In central Africa, 1982 is likely to offer no respite from political instability and economic scarcity. Zaire in particular is likely to be whipsawed between depressed mineral prices and the desperate need for international financial help on the one hand and increasing social unrest and Mobutu's reluctance to impose unpopular austerity measures on the other. A campaign of subversion in mineral-rich Shaba province would add to Mobutu's economic difficulties. Zambia and Tanzania have become the region's other sick men. A siege mentality has settled over Lusaka following a year in which coup rumors abounded and the living standard dipped below pre-independence levels. Food shortages are even more acute in Tanzania where Nyerere is also worried that the mainland's political union with Zanzibar may come unglued.

5. In West Africa, the recent coup in Ghana, the unsuccessful takeover bid by radicals in The Gambia, and riots in Sierra Leone last fall are all symptomatic of the pressures for change that flow from the region's economic, religious, and ethnic diversity. Leftist ideologies and calls for social change hold increasing appeal for disaffected slum dwellers, Islamic fundamentalists, and others who currently have no stake in national life. The Doe regime in Liberia, the focus of US interest in the area, remains relatively stable but continued economic decline and student and tribal unrest make the prognosis guarded for Doe's future.

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6. Libya's meddling in the internal affairs of western and central Africa states grew bolder in the last year. Subversive activities included stirring up ethnic and religious resentments, financing coup plots, and unabashed diplomacy by money.

- Qadhafi recruited dissidents from Niger and provided them with guerrilla training in Libya.
- In Mali, security officials uncovered Libyan funding of a group that was plotting to seize power.
- In Upper Volta, Libyan funds generously distributed to the influential Muslim minority enabled Qadhafi to make some inroads.
- In financially strapped Benin, Libyan military and economic aid as well as cash gifts to government officials did much to ensure the use of Benin as a springboard for subversion in Nigeria and other West African countries.
- Libya's precipitous military withdrawal from Chad in late 1981 appears to be intended in part to encourage new factional fighting that could serve as a pretext for Libyan troops to return if the OAU peacekeeping operation is unable to keep the lid on tensions. It now appears, however, that the entire OAU operation may be terminated by June 1982 for lack of funds.
- Unconfirmed reports also linked Libya to student unrest in Cameroon, fundamentalist Muslim unrest in Senegal, and dissident activity in the Central African Republic and in Sierra Leone.

7. In the Horn of Africa the fundamental causes of turmoil -- Somali irredentism and Ethiopian separatism -- remain unresolved, and prospects for stability have been undermined further by the Libyan-Ethiopian-South Yemeni pact. Libya continues to push Ethiopia to participate actively in its efforts to overthrow President Nimeiri in the Sudan. The Libyans are encouraged by their apparent belief that Sudan is on the brink of an Iranian style people's revolution. However, Addis Ababa pointed out the small number and poor training of Sudanese exiles in Ethiopia and urged instead continued Libyan

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support for the insurgency against Somalia. While the Somali Democratic Salvation Front is beginning to show increased effectiveness as a result of Libyan training and the approximately \$3 million of aid given by Tripoli last year, it probably remains incapable of overthrowing Siad on its own.

8. Activity in the Ogaden has slowed with the Somali army in a state of near-collapse and Somali-supported insurgent groups near the Ogaden border are in disarray. The Ethiopians are concentrating at the present time on a new campaign to eliminate Eritrean dissidents. The Siad regime continues to lose support within Somalia, because of deteriorating economic conditions and continued tribal tensions. There are continuing signs in the military of discontent with Siad's management of the government and the economy.

This completes this brief statement but I would be happy to answer any questions on these or other areas of Africa that may be of interest.